

## Definitions of Smoking Cessation Pharmacotherapy

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**Note:** All individuals who choose to embark upon a tobacco cessation path should consult with their healthcare provider prior to, to ensure their safety.

### Over-the-Counter Drugs

#### *Nicotine Gum (Nicotine Polacrilex)*

- This is a unique variation of gum that contains small, regulated amounts of nicotine and it is meant to help individual's quit smoking. The nicotine, when used correctly, is absorbed by the mouth's lining entering into the body's bloodstream. The gum should be chewed a few times and then parked between the cheek and gumline for 1 minute and repeat. Nicotine gum is recommended to be used for about 12 weeks, with a gradual decrease in consumption occurring throughout the time period.

#### *Nicotine Oral Inhaler*

- Nicotine inhalers are devices that deliver small dosages of nicotine via the lining of the mouth and throat. The dosage is delivered when an individual takes a "puff" from the device releasing a nicotine vapour emitted from the device's cartridge. The individual is to hold the vapour in their mouth for a count of a few seconds then blow out; it is not to be inhaled. It is recommended that one uses this NRT for between six to 12 weeks, reducing the number of cartridges used per week. This type of NRT is helpful for people who seek the habitual hand-to-mouth motion.

#### *Nicotine Lozenge*

- A Nicotine Lozenge is a tablet containing small dosages of nicotine; it is delivered in a comparable manner to that of the Nicotine Gum (via the mouth lining). The lozenge is to be sucked on in a controlled manner until a strong taste occurs, then parked between the cheek and gumline and repeat. Treatment with Nicotine Lozenges will typically last about 12 weeks with consumption of the lozenges decreasing throughout the time span.

#### *Nicotine Patch (Transdermal Nicotine Systems)*

- A small, self-adhesive patch that releases regular, small dosages of nicotine into the body through the dermal route (skin). The patch is to be applied to a hairless piece of skin in an area of the body between the neck and waist and changed daily. It is recommended that an individual use the patch for between 8 to 12 weeks but dependent on cravings and withdrawal symptoms this may be extended for a longer period of time.

### Prescription Medications

#### *Varenicline (Champix)*

- Champix is a prescription oral medication that is used to help an individual quit smoking. The medication assists in this via two means: (1) by controlling and reducing the individual's cravings and withdrawal symptoms and (2) blocking nicotine receptors of the brain, minimizing the pleasure that results from smoking. Typical treatment lasts for about 12 weeks.

#### *Bupropion (Zyban)*

- A prescription oral medication that is categorized as an anti-depressant. The medication is used for tobacco cessation purposes as it is believed to reduce tobacco cravings and withdrawal symptoms by heightening the levels of certain chemicals to the brain like that of dopamine and norepinephrine. Typically Zyban will be prescribed for about 12 weeks to assist in tobacco cessation.

### Resources:

Mayo Clinic Staff. (2014). *Quit-smoking medicines: boost your chance of success*. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/quit-smoking/in-depth/quit-smoking-products/art-20045599>

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. (n.d.) *Medication Recommendations*. Retrieved from <http://www.wrha.mb.ca/professionals/tobacco/files/06%20Medication%20Recommendations.pdf>